

Administration of Barack Obama, 2011

The President's Weekly Address

August 13, 2011

On Thursday, I visited a new high-tech factory in Michigan where workers are helping America lead the way in a growing clean energy industry.

They were proud of their work, and they should be. They're not just showing us a path out of the worst recession in generations. They're proving that this is still a country where we make things; where new ideas take root and grow; where the best universities, most creative entrepreneurs, and most dynamic businesses in the world call home. They're proving that even in difficult times, there's not a country on Earth that wouldn't trade places with us.

That doesn't mean we don't face some very tough economic challenges. Many Americans are hurting badly right now. Many have been unemployed for too long. Putting these men and women back to work and growing wages for everybody has got to be our top priority.

But lately, the response from Washington has been partisanship and gridlock that's only undermined public confidence and hindered our efforts to grow the economy.

So while there's nothing wrong with our country, there is something wrong with our politics. And that's what we've got to fix, because we know there are things Congress can do right now to get more money back in your pockets, get this economy growing faster, and get our friends and neighbors back to work.

That payroll tax cut that put \$1,000 back in the average family's pocket this year, let's extend it. Construction workers who've been jobless since the housing boom went bust, let's put them back to work rebuilding America. Let's cut redtape in the patent process so entrepreneurs can get good ideas to market more quickly. Let's finish trade deals so we can sell more American-made goods around the world. Let's connect the hundreds of thousands of brave Americans coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan to businesses that need their incredible skills and talents.

These are all things we can do right now: So let's do them. And over the coming weeks, I'll put forward more proposals to help our businesses hire and create jobs. And I won't stop until every American who wants a job can find one.

But we can't let partisan brinksmanship get in our way, the idea that making it through the next election is more important than making things right. That's what's holding us back, the fact that some in Congress would rather see their opponents lose than see America win.

So you've got a right to be frustrated—I know am—because you deserve better. And I don't think it's too much for you to expect that the people you send to this town start delivering for you.

Members of Congress are at home in their districts right now. And if you agree with me, whether you're a Democrat or a Republican, or not much of a fan of either, let them know. If you've had it with gridlock and you want them to pass stalled bills that will help our economy right now, let them know. If you refuse to settle for a politics where scoring points is more important than solving problems, if you believe it's time to put country before party and the interests of our children before our own, then let them know.

And maybe they'll get back to Washington ready to compromise, ready to create jobs, ready to get our fiscal house in order, ready to do what you sent them here to do.

Yes, we've still got a long way to go to get to where we need to be. We didn't get into this mess overnight, and it's going to take some time to get out of it. That's a hard truth, but it's no excuse for inaction. After all, America voted for divided Government, not dysfunctional Government, and we've got work to do. And when we come together and find common ground, there is no stopping this country; there is no stopping our people; there is no holding us back. And there is every reason to believe we'll get through this storm to a brighter day.

Thanks for listening, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:00 p.m. on August 12 in the Library at the White House for broadcast on August 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 12, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on August 13.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Weekly addresses.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Subjects: Budget, Federal : Deficit and national debt; Business and industry : Entrepreneurship :: Promotion efforts; Business and industry : Manufacturing industry :: Advanced manufacturing, promotion efforts; Commerce, international : U.S. exports :: Expansion; Congress : Bipartisanship; Economy, national : Economic concerns; Economy, national : Recession, effects; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Elections : 2012 Presidential and congressional elections; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Employment and unemployment : Job losses; Energy : Alternative and renewable sources and technologies :: Promotion efforts; Iraq : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Michigan : President's visit; Science and technology : Patent approval process, improvement efforts; ; Afghanistan : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Taxation : Payroll tax cut; Taxation : Tax relief; Transportation : Infrastructure, national, improvement efforts.

DCPD Number: DCPD201100568.